

By Maurice Ketten

Black Gold

Love plays a vital part in this inspiring romance of a
HOTLY-CONTESTED OIL FIGHT

It is so dark and depressing out here. It makes me sad."

"Surely you do not want to die in the house?"

"In your mind?"

"Just as you wish. This is your avenue."

But he was not pleased.

It was only with wild driving that she got back to the hospital by 10 o'clock.

Wilson left her at the corner, well content with himself.

As he got into his car at the curb a handsome man who had been standing in the shadow of the tree box moved quickly away.

Wilson smiled after him in the darkness.

"That you, Joe?" he called.

But the boy went on.

On her first holiday half holiday she was free in the morning, and went to church with her mother, going back to the hospital after the service. So it was two weeks before she saw Moyne again. Now that it was only for a short time, Christine and Palmer Howe came in to see her, and to inspect the balcony, now finished.

But when Moyne had a few words together first.

There was a change in Sidney. Le Moyne was quick to see it. She was a trifle subdued, with a pained look in her eyes. Her mouth was tender, as always, but he thought it drooped. There was a new atmosphere of winfulness about the girl that made him feel that she was older, as he himself was.

He seemed older than she had re-

CHAPTER VIII.

SIDNEY entered the hospital as a probationer early in August. Christina was to be married in September to Palmer Howe, and, with Harriet and K. in the house, she felt that she could safely leave her mother.

The balcony outside the parlor was already under way. On the night before she went away, Sidney sat alone and viewed her world from this new and pleasant angle.

called him, the hair over his ears was almost white. And yet, he was just thirty. But he held himself more erect than he had in the first days of his occupancy of the second floor front.

Across the street the Rosefield boy had stopped by Dr. Wilson's car and was eyeing with keen, appraising glance of the street boy whose sole knowledge of machinery has been acquired from the clothes-washer at home. Joe Drummond, eyes carefully ahead, went up the street.

CHAPTER X.

When Monday morning brought

Lo Moyné's light was still going. The rest of the household slept. She paused outside the door.

"Are you asleep?"—very softly.

There was a movement inside, the sound of a book put down. Then:

"No, I'm not."

"I may not see you in the morning. I leave to-morrow."

"Just a minute."

From the sounds she judged he was putting on his shabby gray coat. The next moment he had opened the door and stepped out into the corridor.

"I believe you had forgotten!"

"I? Certainly not. I started down-

"Only Joe Drummond." He gazed down at her quizzically. "And—is Joe more reasonable?" "I'll tell you. He knows now that I—that I shall not marry him." He hesitated. Then, hurriedly: "I got a little present for you—nothing much, but your mother was quite willing; in fact, we bought it together."

He went back into his room and returned with a small box. "With some sort of good luck," he said, and placed it in her hands. "How dear of you! And may I look now?"

"With your eyes closed. Because, if you would rather have something else?"

"I only want to say how—*dear*—I'm just on my way through town."

"I'll say it for you."

A certain doggedness took the place of the hesitancy. "I'll say it myself, I guess. I don't want any unpleasantness, but I've come a good ways to see her, and I'll have to say it."

Mrs. McKee knew herself routed, and retreated to the kitchen.

"You're wanted out front," she said. "Who is it?"

"No one mind. Only, my advice to you is, don't be a fool."

Tillie went suddenly pale. The hands with which she tied a white scarf over her glumish one were shaking.

Her visitor had accepted the open

She opened the box with excited fingers. Ticking away on its satin blue lining, she found a note pinned to the bottom.

"You'll need it, you see," he explained nervously. "It wasn't extravagant under the circumstances. You'll need it, you see. You had intended to take, had no second hand. You'll need a second hand to take pulses, you know."

"What?" said Sidney, eyes on it. "A dear little watch, to pin on and not put in a pocket. Why, you're the best person!"

"You would say I might think it presumptuous," he said.

"Don't apologize for making me so happy," she cried. "It's wonderful, really. And the little hand is for me, isn't it? How many queer things you know?"

door as permission to enter and was surprised to find the door ajar.

He went rather white himself when he saw Tillie coming toward him down the hall. He knew that for Tillie this visit would mean that he had been seen by her friend, Elmer, the terror of his errand filled him.

"Well, here I am, Tillie."

"All dressed up and so highly perfumed," she said, "with the question in her eyes. 'You're quite a stranger, Mr. Schweitzer.'"

"I was passing through, and I just thought I'd come in and tell you."

"My God, Tillie, I'm glad to see you!"

She made no reply but opened the door into the cool and shaded little parlor, and followed Elmer in and closed the door behind him.

"I couldn't help it. I know I prom-

After that she must pin it on and slip it to stand before his mirror and inspect it. Then she goes to Le Mayore a queer thrill to see her there in the room, among his books and his pipes, "I've kept you up shamefully," she said, "and I'm sorry very much. I shall write you a note from the hospital, delivering a little lecture on extravagance—because how can I now do it?—and I'll join you in the morning about how to keep Kean in order about your socks and all sorts of things. And—now, good-night!"

"Good-night," said Sidney, and he followed her, stooping a little to pass under the low chandelier.

"Good night," said Sidney, "and God bless you."

She went out and he closed the door softly behind her.

CHAPTER IX.

SHUNNY never forgot her early impressions of the hospital, although they were chaotic enough at first. There were uniforms and young women smiling and waving, and

Tittle "What's that got to do with me?"

"You're lonely, too, ain't you?"

"Oh, what's the use?" cried poor Tittle. "We can talk our heads off and not get any nearer. You're got a wife living, and unless you intend to do away with her, I guess that's all there is to it."

(To Be Continued.)

(To Be Continued)

WHY DON'T YOU WORK?

I AM DEAD FOR SLEEP I WAS UP ALL NIGHT

Peter

His slippery sides. He had prodigious strength, in spite of his lankness, a

"Well," said Sidney, when they were both on the rook, carefully balanced.

"Do you cold?"

"Not a bit. But horribly unhappy. I must look a sight." Then, remembering her manners, as the Street had it, she said primly:

"And I'm starving me."

"There wasn't any danger, really, unless—unless the river had risen."

And then, suddenly, he burst into loud laughter, the first, perhaps, for months. He shook with it, struggled at the sight of her injured face to restrain it, achieved finally a degree of control by fixing his eyes on the river bank.

"When you have quite finished," said Sidney severely, "perhaps you will take me to the hotel. I dare say I shall have to be washed and ironed."

He drew her cautiously to her feet. Her wet skirts clung to her; her hair dripped. He held her by the arm, and clung to him frantically, her eyes on the river below. With the touch of her hands the man's mirth died. He held her more carefully, very tenderly, he held something infinitely precious.

supper—how does it sound? You could get away at seven."

"Miss Gregg is coming."

"But he was clever with the guile of the pursuing male. Eyes of all on him, he turned out the door of the wardrobe room, where he would exchange his white garments for street-clothing, and spoke to her over the banister—frozen nurses."

"That patient's address that I had forgotten, Miss Harrison, is the corner of the Park and Ellington Avenue."

"Thank you."

Sidney took her involuntary bath in the river, had gone into temporary eclipse at the White Springs Hotel. In the oven of the kitchen stove alone, he suffered, sufficed, sufficed with paper so that they might dry its shape. Back in a detached laundry, a synthetic maid was ironing various soft white garments.

Some one tapped lightly at the door.

"Yes?"

"It's Le Moyne. Are you all right?"

"Perfectly. How stupid it must be for you!"

"Being very well. The maid will soon be ready. What shall I order for tea?"

"Anything. I'm starving."

"The moon has arrived, as per specifications. Shall we eat on the terrace?"

CHAPTER VI.

HE came day Dr. Max operated at the hospital. One of the innovations Dr. Max had made was to change the hour for major operations from early morning to mid-afternoon.

The day had been a hard one. The operating room nurses were fagged. Two or three probationers had been sent to help clean up, and a senior nurse, Wilson's eyes caught the nurse's eyes as she passed him.

"Here, too, Miss Harrison?" he said gayly, waving they let you on my trail?"

With the eyes of the room on her, the girl answered primly:

"I'm to be in your office in the mornings, Dr. Wilson, and anywhere I am needed in the afternoons."

He was in a magnanimous mood. He smiled at Miss Gregg, who was edgy and gray, but wisby his creature.

"The sponge list, doctor?"

He glanced over it, noted accurately, signed it, used, turned in. But he missed no gesture of the girl who stood beside Miss Gregg.

"All right." He returned the list. "That's a mighty pretty probationer I brought you yesterday."

Two small frowning lines appeared between Miss Harrison's dark brows. He caught them, caught her sombre eyes, took her away amused and unannounced.

"She is very young."

"Prefer 'em young," said Dr. Max. "What's the least bit that age. You'll have to watch her, though. You'll have all the internes buzzing around, neglecting business."

Miss Gregg flushed, flattered.

Wilson was left alone with Miss Harrison.

"Tired?" He adopted the gentle, almost deferential tone that made most women his slaves.

"A little. It is warm."

"What are you going to do this evening?" Any lectures?

"I'm sure are going for the summer. I shall go to prayers, and after that to the roof for air."

"Can't you take a little ride to-night?"

"I don't know. I'll have the car brought over, say, a ride and some

"I have never eaten on a terrace in my life. I'd love it."

At the foot of the stairs he was startled out of his reverie. Joe Drummond stood there waiting for him, his blue eyes recklessly alight.

"You—you dog!" said Joe.

"There were people in the hotel porch. Le Maitre thought I treated him by the elbow and led him past the door to the empty porch."

"Now," he said, "if you will keep your voice down, I'll listen to what you have to say."

"You know what I've got to say."

"This failing to draw from K. Le Moyne anything but his steady glance?"

Joe jerked his arm free and clenched his fist.

"What did you bring her out here for?"

"I do not know that I owe you any explanation, but I am willing to give you one. I brought her out here for a trolley ride and a picnic luncheon. In the trolley I brought the ground squirrel out and I gave him free."

He was sorry for the boy. Life no having been all beer and skittles to him, he knew that Joe was suffering and was marvellously patient with him.

"Where is she now?"

"She had the misfortune to fall in the middle of the staircase. And losing the light of unbelief in Joe's eyes."

"If you care to make a tour of investigation you will find that I am entirely truthful. In the laundry a maid."

"She is engaged to me!"—doggedly.

"Everybody in the neighborhood knows it and yet you bring her out here for a picnic! It's a damned rotten treatment."

His fist had undenched. Before it fell he saw the girl's own face. He felt suddenly young and foolish, his just rage turned to blustering in his ears.

"Now, be honest with yourself. I'm there now, aren't I?"

"Yes," doggedly.

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SPORTING AGAIN?

NO, WALKING THE FLOOR ALL NIGHT WITH MY TWINS

DAVID COVERLY

“Even in that case, isn’t it rather arrogant to say that—the that the young man in question can accept no ordinary friendly attentions from another man?”

Utter astonishment left Joe almost speechless. The Street, of course, re-

Only about the hospital—but I. . . .
Moyne had kept the note, treasure
It? Joe was not sure, not sure
lover; but he was a lover, and he
knew the ways of love. The Pages
roomer was in love with Sidney
whether he knew it or not.

CHAPTER VII.

CARLOTTA HARRISON picked a headache, and was excused from the operating-room and from prayers.

Carlotta Harrison was not a child. Though she was only three years older than Sidney, her experience of life was as of three to Sidney's one. The product of a curious marriage—Mr. Tommy Harrison of Harrison's-Mistrels, touring Spain with his troupe had met the pretty daughter of a

"K. Lee Moyne towering five inches above me and growing a little white hair about the temples."

"Are you going to say all these things to Sidney?"

"Does she allow you to call her Sidney?"

"She does."

"Are you?"

"I am. And I am going to find out why you were upstairs just now."

"Perhaps never in his twenty-two years," said Sidney, "but I was so near a thrashing. Fure that he was ashamed of shook Le Moyne. For very fear of himself he thrust his hands in the pockets of his Norfolk coat."

"Very well," he said. "You go to her with just one of these ugly insinuations, and I'll take mighty good notice."

care to threaten. You're younger than I am, and lighter. But if you are going to behave like a bad child, you deserve a licking, and I'll give it to you."

An overflow from the parlor poured out on the porch. Le Moyne had got himself in hand somewhat. He was still in the room, but the door had started him. He put a hand on the boy's shoulder.

"You're wrong, old man," he said. "You're insulting the girl you care for by talking to her like that. I'll tell you, if it's any comfort to you, I have no intention of interfering in any way. You can count me out. It's between you and her."

Joe picked his straw hat from a chair and stood turning it in his hands.

She put on a soft black dress, open at the throat, and with a wide white collar, and cuffs of some sheer material. The yellow hair was pinned under her black hat, from which her Spanish mother also had learned to please the man, not herself. She guessed that Ursula would, she thought, be impetuous, and she dressed accordingly. Then, being a cautious person, she disarranged her hair slightly and thumped a hollow note on the pillow of the room where she was subjected to inspection, and she hid her head behind a headache.

She was exactly on time. Dr. May was drinking up the dinner two minutes late, and she was there, quite matter-of-factly but exceedingly handsome, and she acknowledged the evening's adventure.

"When if you didn't care for her how do I know she isn't crazy about you?"

"My word of honor, she isn't," "She sends you notes to McKee's."

"Just to tell me she'll show it to you. It's no breach of confidence. It's about the hospital."

Into Joe's breast pocket of his coat he discreetly brought up the wallet. The wallet had had a name on it in gilt letters that had been carefully scraped off. But Joe did not care to write.

"Oh, damn the hospital!" he said—and went swiftly down the steps.

It was only when he reached the street car and sat behind her corner that he remembered something.

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